

A N
OLIVE BRANCH
O F
P E A C E
A N D
ACCOMMODATION,
B U D D I N G

In a S E R M O N preached at *Basingshaw* Church,
T O

The Lord Major Alderman *Atkin*, together with
the Representative City, *Anno Dom.* 1645.

On a Day of Humiliation, appointed on purpose to seek the Lord
for the repairing of Breaches, and the preventing of fur-
ther Differences growing in the City.

By *Thomas Hill* B. D. then Pastor of
Tychmerish in Northamptonshire.

2 Cor. 1. 12. For our rejoicing is this, The testimony of our conscience, that in sim-
plicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God,
we have had our conversation in the world.

Zech. 8. 19. Love the Truth and Peace.

Non piget me (inquit Augustinus) sicubi hæsito quærere nec pigebit, sicubi
erro deferere; Quisquis ergo hoc audit & legit, ubi pariter lectus est
pergat mecum, ubi pariter hæsitat quærat mecum, ubi errorem suum cog-
noscit, redeat ad me, ubi meum revocit me, istum ingrediamur simul eha-
ritatis viam tendentes ad eum de quo dictum est quærite faciem ejus sem-
per. S. Augustini, Epist. ad Vincentium.

London, Printed for *Peter Cole*, at the Printing-Press in Cornhil,
near the Royal Exchange, 1 6 4 8.



To the Right Worshipful
 Sir John Wollaston,
 Alderman of the City of
LONDON,

A true friend to Religion and Learning,
*Abundance of Spiritual Blessings in
 Christ.*

S I R,



On Who live in the upper end of the world, as you have the highest Truths, so have you the richest Opportunities of cherishing, and thereby engaging many. Therein indeed you resemble the Celestial bodies, which by beams and motion convey a quickning influence downwards, which naturally occasions a reciprocal reflexion upwards. Unthankfulness to God (whether he communicate himself to us immediately, or mediately by men and means) was an hateful sin, even in the Gentiles; and the more ingenious of the Heathen much decry'd it. The unthankful man is a Compensator of all evils.

Rom. I. 21.

Ἀνθυμωσίου
 οὐκ ἔστι τοῦ

It behoveth the party gratified, to be proportionably serviceable to him that gratified him, and to begin again, saith the Philosopher: And that which is much more, The Apostle Paul charges it upon his Colossians, Let the peace of God rule in your

χαριστομένων
 ἡ ἀληθία
 ἵνα ἀρχῇ

χαριστομένων.
 Arist. Eth.

l. 5. c. 5.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Col. 1. 15.

*Spa Ceuw
cum insur-
gunt in cordi-
bus nostris
turbidi affe-
ctus ira odii
vindicta, &c.
hæc pax Dei
debet instar
agonotheta li-
tes dirimere
& omnia ad
pacem deduc-
cere. Daven.
in Locum.*

your hearts (*scil.* peace with one another, which is from God, as Warring and fierceness amongst Saints is certainly from the Devil) to which ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful: But alas, Where shall I begin to say or do any thing proportionably?

Yet, I hope, I shall never be a Sepulchre to bury by unthankful forgetfulness the extraordinary and unexpected Kindnesses (I must speak in the plural number) With which you were pleased to surprize me, When you were Lord Major: Herein you acted like the primus Motor, who does great things where there is no previous preparation in the subject, I being a meer stranger to you.

And now I have a more deep Obligation to make publike acknowledgement, and to provoke the whole University of Cambridge, together With my self (whose advantage is wrapt up in theirs) to study how to make suitable expressions of our real thanksgiving.

Your most seasonable intention and execution, of enriching us With a Mathematique Lecture (a rich Treasure indeed, to us who had but a Four pound stipend per annum for our Mathematique Lecturer) which is the more noble in you, and Welcom to us, because one little intimation by me to you, did but meet, and give a vent to your full inclination, which was ready to overflow. Something to purpose you would do for Cambridge, to advance Learning, onely you waited for a fit occasion, to have it determined to a proper Channel. How greatly indebted is the University of Cambridge to the City of London, That two of their Alderman should contribute so liberally to maintain such necessary Lectures? Alderman Adams (to Whom the University is much obliged for publike, and I for personal favors) hath bestowed means to support a Reader of the Arabick Tongue, and the other Oriental Languages: The mercy of God raising his heart thereunto, is the sweeter to us, because we hope it may in time, by Gods gracious dispensation, be a means of communicating the Gospel, in stead of the Soul-deceiving Alcaron, and recover many from under Mahomets Impostures, and other poor seduced souls from under the power of darkness, and hardness of heart.

Mr. Abr. Wheelock a very industrious man, and able man in many parts of learning.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Confusion of Languages was a curse, whereby one could not Gen. 11. 7.
understand another how to build their Babel: But such a multiplying of Languages, that the Apostles might communicate A. 2. 3, 4, 8.
Gospel-secrets to various Nations, was a great Blessing, and much advanced the building of Jerusalem, and pulling down of Babylon.

And without doubt there is much of God in it, that now there should be a more then ordinary instinct, both in your minds to minde such Studies, and Benefactors to encourage them; and especially when both meet with staggering, among some of the learned Doctors of the Jews, who begin to shake their doubts and fears, that all this while they have been deluded, and used their wits and learning to cloud those Scriptures, whose light now begins to shine into their mindes, and I trust in Gods time will into their hearts.

2 Cor 4. 4

I have it related from very good hands, That a Citizen of London being in Aleppo, heard a very learned Jewish Rabbi, being sick, call his people together, who wisshed them very seriously to consider the divers former Captivities they had undergone for the hardness of their hearts, and now one for above One thousand six hundred years, the cause of which is doubtless our unbelief and hardness of heart. We have long looked for the Messiah, and the Christians have believed in one JESUS of our Nation, who was of the seed of Abraham and David, and born in Bethlehem, and (for ought we know) may be the true Messiah; and that we have suffered this long Captivity, because we have not believed, but rejected him: Therefore my advice is, as my last words, That if the Messiah which we expect, do not come at or about the year 1650. accompting from the birth of their Christ, then you may know and believe, That this Jesus is the Christ, and you shall have no other: And within a little time after this old Doctor dyed.

Note.

And now, much honored Sir, that the Lord should ennoble your Spirit to seile a Mathematique Lecture here, is the more welcom to us, because as Alderman Adams his worthy Donation will help to polish our Tongues, enable us to receive and communicate the choicest secrets, Your bounty will help to enlarge our mindes, to consolidate our judgements. Hence

The Epistle Dedicatory.

it may be it was the Ancient Philosophers taught their Pupils Mathematiques very soon (as appears by Aristotle and others) they confirming their Propositions by Mathematical Demonstrations, the knowledge whereof must be presupposed. And hence the Witty and learned Lord Verulam would have feather-headed yong men study the Mathematiques, there being the most clear and certain Demonstration to compose and fettle yong heads.

I hope your Mathematical Lecturer will read the University such a Lecture, wherein he may like a good Arithmetician, number the many years comprised in this one of yours, and like a skilful Geometrician and Astronomer, take the Dimensions and Altitude of your Intentions herein, to your perpetual Honor.

And shall likewise expect, That many (by the blessing of the Lord) will inherite the fruit of this Donation. The Wise God hath denied you Children, How can you do better, then make so publike a good at least part of your Heir?

Essay 7.

I conceive there is much in that of the Lord Verulam, The noblest works (saith he) and foundations, have proceeded from Childless men, which have sought to expresse the Images of their mindes, where those of their bodies have failed: So, the care of Posterity is most in them that have no Posterity.

Gen. 33. 5.

I know well Children are, in Jacobs language, pledges of Gods grace; yet I will be bold to tell you what hath much satisfied my Spirit (my condition herein being yet, by the All-disposing hand of God, the same with yours) in the want of such a mercy.

1. *This hath often been the portion of the dearest Seryants of God, to want Children.*

2. *No one childe of God hath reason to expect all mercies; some want Estates, some want Health, and to some he denies Children.*

3. *Children are but Temporal mercies, and therefore no infallible marks of Gods electing love: Here all things come alike to all.*

Eccles 9. 2.

4. *It is a greater mercy to be a childe of God, then to have a childe from God.*

5. *When*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

5. When God denies such a blessing, he can give contentation of Spirit to be without it, which makes it no affliction.

6. It may be God intends to honor such, in making them the more serviceable, and liberal to some publike uses; whereas for the most part, their minds who have children are more narrow contracted and confined to make provision for their Posterity.

If the Lord vouchsafe thus to use you, and draw out your Spirit this way, though you want Children, yet you have such Heirs, as will help to enrich you in the way of Judgement.

You will please (Honored Sir) to accept this, together with a plain Sermon, which you would have had made publike immediately after the preaching of it. I now finding it transcribed by him who took it in Characters, and when as I had often withstood importunate motions to that purpose, yet still being threatened with the publishing of it, by some who might probably prevail with him, I rather chose to overlook his Notes (so much as my Age would allow me) and to answer your desire and theirs, though it hath nothing to commend it, but the plainness and peaceableness of it.

And were reconciling Sermons ever more seasonable then now, when there are so many Incendiaries in City and Countrey, yea, such as would blow the coal, and put both the Kingdoms into a new flame? He who is great in counsel, and mighty in work, go on still (as he hath most graciously) to discover and curse such Plots, and blast such Machinations, according to his gracious promise, Isa. 54.

What ever others say or think, I am convinced, we ought to be so far from quarrelling with our Brethren of Scotland, that we should rather provoke one another to bless God for them who first appeared with much zeal in the cause of Reformation, which awakened us who were in a deep sleep of security, and, I doubt, should have swallowed that Service-Book which they so resolutely opposed.

Again, they came in most seasonably to help us, when we were very low upon the loss of Bristol.

Lastly, They who are indeed our Brethren in and of Scotland do

The Epistle Dedicatory.

now throw Water upon that fire of Contention which so many would enkindle, otherwise (probably) we might have been in Blood and Confusion before this hour. And shall we suffer our selves, by the policies of selfish men, to be engaged actively to joyn With such, who would destroy both us and them, and hazard the ruine of that Cause, the maintaining Whereof hath cost so dear. God forbid that ever We should so much scandalize and Weaken the Protestant Churches abroad.

There is an old Prophecie in Poly Chronicon, That England shall be overcome three times, by Danes, by Normans, and then by Scots; *But the British Conquest will not be Military, as from sons of Violence, but only Moral and Federal, bringing us under the bond of the same Covenant with them.*

Niceph.

Ver. 3.

You have also an ancient Historian, who saith, London is one of the three Cities of the world which shall never be absolutely Conquered. I heartily wish you may have no other Contention amongst you, but that of the Apostle Jude, Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints; and striving by an holy emulation who should most advance to holy Union of Truth and Love, of Righteousness and Peace, and who shall most magnifie Jesus Christ in their Places and Relations.

This, I doubt not, is the every-days work of you (Honored Sir) and of your good Lady; wherein, that you may abound yet more and more, he prays, who is very much

Your Worships obliged Servant,

From my Study in Tr.
Coll: in Cambridge,
May 29. 1648.

Thomas Hill.



THE
BEAUTY & SWEETNES
Of an OLIVE BRANCH of
P E A C E,
AND
Brotherly Accommodation.

I John 3.18,19,20,21.

My little children, let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and truth.

And hereby we know that we are of God, and shall assure our hearts before him.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.

THe words themselves are an excellent Sermon, without any further enlargement, and especially upon such a day as this is, *A praying, and An uniting day*; And as Father *Latimer* began before King *Edward the sixth*, and his Honorable Councel *Anno Dom. 1550.* if I should say nothing for three or four hours together, but, *Take heed, and beware of covetousness*, it would be thought a strange Sermon to a King, yet might prove seasonable: So if

The Scripture speaks many things negatively which are to be understood only comparatively.

I should only take the *Apostle Johns Sermon*, as story relates of him, That when he was grown old, and not able to preach largely, he was carried into the Assemblies, and he would only repeat these words, *Little children, love one another*. Had you no other Sermon this day, but those words repeated over and over, if God would bless it, that it might make impression upon your spirits, I hope, though a short and unexpected one, yet it would prove a sweet, at least a *very useful Sermon*: Thus the *Apostle* begins here, *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth*. Not in word only, there is a great deal of *Lip-love*: Not in tongue only, there is a great deal of *Complemental-love*, where there is no hearty, no *Real-love*: But how should we love? *In deed and in truth*, that men might speak their hearts, and act their hearts, and express their hearts, in the love they do pretend; this is Christian love indeed.

Three Arguments the Apostle now here uses, to engage this reality of their affection one to another.

1. *Hereby we know that we are of the truth*: All Gods children are such children as do indeed love one another, they have an *instinct* that carries them to it, and this will be a clear discovery that you are of the truth; *true children* indeed, no bastards, truly begotten again by the Spirit of God: *Hereby we know that we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren* (saith John) Eph. 1.3, 14. yea Christ goes higher, Joh. 13. 35. *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another*; that is one very strong argument that might bespeak your mutual affection: To have a *clear evidence* that you are Gods children, whatsoever sad news you should hear upon earth, if you had but a *demonstration from heaven* of that this day, it would be worth more prayers and tears, then I doubt you or I shall pour out before the Lord.

A second Argument is this, *And shall assure our hearts before him*: Have a sweet confidence, a stability of Spirit, though there be a sea of trouble without, yet here will be a *bosom-ark*, something within that will fix and settle the soul; there thou mayest cast anchor, and lie safe, having a persuasion, having an assurance before God, however unsettled before men, and ebbing

and

and *flowing*, and *rising* and *falling*, now good news, and then bad news, that damps, that dathes all ; yet do but love one another in deed and in truth, as you ought to do, and you shall have assurance before God.

A third Argument he uses in the 22. Verse, *And whatsoever we ask, We receive of him* : This would be an admirable hint this day, if you and I could gather such an evidence out of the *Word of God*, that we may be assured, *That whatsoever we ask, we shall receive* : We come to ask great matters, and to beg great things of God this day, and now to have an earnest-peny from Heaven, that as sure as you make prayers, so sure your prayers shall be answered ; would not this be an excellent advantage ? He tells you upon what terms, If you do but love one another in deed and in truth. *These are the three Arguments* to demonstrate this truth, and quicken to this duty.

But now for the 2. Argument, as the *Apostle* amplifies it, and indeed those are the words that I shall insist upon. What a very great advantage now is it to have this assurance before God (saith he) in the 21. Verse, *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God* : If you have clear hearts before God, if you have not a self-condemning heart, but upon the examination of your selves, and weighing your own spiritual condition in the ballance of the Sanctuary, you can finde your love is weight, it is not counterfeit, copper love, when you bring it to the touchstone ; but you are indeed taught of God to love one another, you may have confidence towards God ; But on the other side, *if our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things* : But when you come to examine your hearts, your hearts cry guilty, and have a self-condemning heart, Oh ! woful is your condition ! If your heart that is dark and ignorant, and knows but a little of your selves, if it condemn you and fly in your face ; you must know you have to deal with the great God of heaven and earth, Amos 4. 13. *he knows all things* ; and if your own heart condemn you, you will be condemned with a witness, with a vengeance indeed, if not only your own hearts, but God himself should condemn you.

And so you have some short and general resolution of the words, out of these two Verses.

I have four short Propositions, and I will name them, and upon every one of them very briefly speak something, as near as I can (as God shall direct) suitable to this day.

The first Proposition is this,

That the heart of man hath a self-condemning, and a self-absolving power.

Secondly, *That God knows our own very hearts, yea, and more by us, then we know by our selves.*

Thirdly, *If our own heart do condemn us, it is an evidence of greater condemnation from the All-searching God.*

Fourthly, *If our own heart do absolve us, it is an evidence of acceptance before God.*

These four Points lie obviously above ground in the words:

And we will begin with the first. I have but a very little to say on that, onely to use it as a Key to open the door to what follows:

1. Obser.

The heart or conscience of man hath a self-condemning, and self-absolving Power.

Conscientia
est judicium
dominis de
semet ipso pro
ut subicitur
judicio Dei.
1sa. 5. 3.
1 Cor. 11. 31
Amef. cal.
Consc. l. c. 1.
conscience.

If our heart condemn us not, that is, excuse us, absolve us; the heart of man or conscience, for they are doubtless the same here: *Conscience* (that is) a practical power of the soul, bearing witness of our selves and actions, according to the knowledge of Gods Law: God hath given to man, not onely a power of knowing, but likewise a conscience; a power of knowing together with God, a recoyling and reflecting upon our own actions, and upon our estates; the judgement of man reflecting upon himself, as he is under, and subject to the judgement of God; this is that conscience here, the heart: The Lord gives us a practical understanding, a practical knowledge, and principles; does enable us to make an application of those practical principles, to our own particular case: And hereupon it is, that every man, though never bred up to be a Logician in the Schools, yet knows how to make Syllogisms, either pro or con, for or against himself: Every body will be able to say this, *He that walks uprightly, he that lives the life of faith, he shall be saved*; there's a general principle laid down in the word of God; then the heart does assume, *but I through the grace*

of God desire to walk uprightly, I am taught to believe on Christ.

In the first proposition, there the heart is (as it were) a book, a volume full of Principles; Here in the second proposition, there it is a witness, it bears witness together with God, knows wish him, what its own condition is, or what its actions are; and therefore in the conclusion it is a Judge, I shall be saved, and I shall be accepted by him: Every one that is unrighteous, and so lives, and so dyes, against him God is thus provok'd; but I am so and so, therefore against me: No unrighteous person shall inherit the Kingdom of God; but I am unrighteous, therefore I cannot come there: Every man or woman, be they never so ignorant (in this or in any other Assembly) hath such a power within them, God hath implanted in their mindes such a power, set up such a light in thy soul, as that thus far thou mayest be Judge of thy self, and thy own actions, that thou canst either condemn or absolve thy self.

If your heart, if your Consciences have a power of self-condemning, and self-absolving; *Applic.*

Then it is good to observe your Consciences, and be sure to make your Conscience your friend, and minde (likewise) as of Instruction. Carefully, what conscience says to you: As you in your City Transactions, I make no question, but you preserve Records, and what Acts pass, or Orders, or Decrees (or whatsoever you call them) at your meetings, at your Common-Council with the Court of Aldermen, because you would be able to read over the Story, to know how justly things were done, and what may be a Rule for the time to come, &c. Let us be as careful to keep the Records of Conscience, and to observe upon every occasion what your hearts say, what conscience says: For be you sure of this, that Conscience hath a self-absolving, and a self-condemning power; and though it may be now thou little mindest it, hereafter when thou comest to dye, then Conscience will rub up thy Memory; surely, you lived under such a Minister, and such Items you had given you, and thus Conscience did work; and sometimes you were almost perswaded, with Agrippa, and looked Heaven-ward, and saw your errors, and were almost perswaded to turn over a new leaf; but still thou smotherest Conscience.

Rom. 2. 15.

1 Joh. 3. 20.

1. Use of Instru-
tion.Conscientia
est naturale
judicatorium.
Ambr.Frangit anse,
flagellum post
peccatum.

Acts 26. 28.

Conscientia
mille resiles
mille exercitus

Conscience. O this will be a sad thing, if thy Conscience comes in against thee another day, it will not onely be a thousand *Witnesses*, but a thousand *Armies* to destroy thee over and over; look to it now, how you approve your selves, even to your own Conscience: And let me here by the way suggest but this to you, Suppose you make a few *Queries* to Conscience now, and allow Conscience likewise to make some *Queries* to you.

1. *Quære.* What stewards have you been of all the Talents that God hath committed to your hands?

ὁ δὲ κτλ
ἐν τῇ
ἐκκλησίᾳ
ἐκκλησία.

It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

A steward (say the Lawyers) is a servant which is wont to set forth his Masters good for advantage: What says Conscience? Many of you are crowned with gray hairs, and have been advanced to Places of great Power in the City, and you have lived upon the goodness of your God, it may be some of you fifty, sixty years, or more, and a great stock of Talents hath gone through thy hands, and thou shouldst have been trading faithfully for thy God all this while, what account now can you give to Conscience? Suppose you were now to keep conscience counting house (for you will allow the word, to speak it in your own language) I would it were more frequent to keep a Soul-counting house, as well as for your Estates; a Closet for your consciences, and enter in there: Thus long I have lived in the world, how much have I lived to my God (we live indeed so much, as we act for God, and no more) what says Conscience?

Diu fuit parum vixit, faith Sen. of one.
Stulti semper incipiunt vivere. Sen.

There have many men been in the world a great while, and yet lived but a little while, and it may be scarce begun to live yet, but lived to themselves, and to their lusts, and to the service of sin, and to the drudgery of Satan all this while; Give an account of thy stewardship, suppose that were thy word in Luke 16. 2. What says conscience now? I doubt it would almost strike some of you dead, while you were alive, if you had but a real *Summons* indeed; that this were your last day: O! then Conscience would work strongly, and make you tremble as *Felix*; and look pale, if you did believe that God would break the thread of thy life suddenly: Suppose thou wert a *dying man*, what says Conscience? Hast thou been a faithful steward? Canst thou give a good and sincere account of those Talents that God hath entrusted thee with?

Acts 24. 25.

2. *Quære.*

2. Quære. Let me put this as a second Quære, what wilt thou say to thy conscience,

How hast thou answered all thy Vows, and Protestations, and Covenants, and all the Purposes and Promises that you have made? And canst thou say resolutely with him, Psal. 56. 12. Thy Vows are upon me, I will render praises unto thee? Or that thou hast done so?

Many of you might say, not onely with the Psalmist, *Thy Vows are upon me*, but thy *Protestations* and thy *Covenants*; yea (it may be) have entred into a curse to walk in Gods Law, as they in *Nehemiah*, Chap. 10. 29. The Lord knows that very great Obligations lie upon many of you: How many *Publike Fasting-days* have you had? not a day but you did, or should renew your *Covenant With God*: How many *Communion-days* have you had? not a Communion day but you either did, or should renew your *Covenant With your God*: Some of you are under some Obligation or other, and under the Obligation of the *Solemn League and Covenant*: How have you answered all these in advancing the glory of God, and the *Publike good*, and the carrying on the *Work of a Scripture-Reformation*, What says conscience?

3. Quære. Further, if this Quære should be proposed, *How can you wash your hands of the guils of other mens sins?* What would you that are the *Representative City* say to that now? Suppose that all the *Drunkenness*, and all the *Sabbath-breaking*, and the *uncleanness*, and the *prodigious wickedness* that hath been committed in the City, and in the Suburbs up and down upon the Sabbath-day, and in other places where the *Government of the City* hath had, or may have influence: Suppose this should all now be laid at your door this day. I say, the Lord Major, the Court of Aldermen, the Common-Council-men, and they that had the Government of the City, they are accountable to God, for all the Oathes, and Uncleanneses, and wickednesses that they have known of, and have not punished according to the Acts, and Ordinances, and Statutes that are to this purpose. Give me leave to propound this in the Name of the great God to your Consciences: What can you say to this? Can you wash your hands in innocency? I doubt, besides all your hy-

Oathes

Oaths that you may be guilty of *personally*, and besides all your *secret uncleanness*, that others may be guilty of, and besides the *Injustice and Propheaneſs* that your own *hearts* accuse you of: Do you not think that many of the *City-abominations* (I mean those common abominations that are committed by divers in the City) may be charged upon the *remiſs Government* of the City, even in a great measure: It is good for you now to ask conscience, when you come to humble your souls before God, and to deal more seriously with him; and I hope you will now allow your *Ministers* to deal faithfully and plainly with you, as in the sight of the Lord, who will judge both *Minister and people* at the great Day; Had you not need pray with the good old Father, Lord, *forgive me my other mens ſins*?

4. Quæ. Let me adde this Quære, what ſays Conſcience of this?

Many of you, I think I may ſay (if I ſhould be miſtaken in the Affairs of the City, you will pardon one that lives at ſuch a diſtance) are all *Publike perſons in ſome degree*, that have any thing to do with the *Government of the City*: What will conſcience ſay to this now? *What ends, what aymes have you had in all your publike undertakings?* Whether hath *Self* or *Publike* been moſt advanced? What ſays Conſcience to this plain Quære? (remember your hearts, your conſciences have a ſelf-*abſolving*, or a ſelf-*condemning power*) You are moſt happy ſouls, if upon good grounds indeed, your conſciences do now *abſolve* you, and can ſay, O! Conſcience tells me I have been a good Steward; and Conſcience tells me I have obſerved my Vows and Covenants; and Conſcience tells me that I am innocent I have no other mens ſins to reckon for, or at leaſt I have put them off my ſelf, *improving my power againſt them, or by my repentance for neglect thereof*: And Conſcience does not fly in my face, I have had a *Publike ſpirit in Publike Employment*; happy are thoſe ſouls (*would we had more ſuch*;) I am afraid there are but few that can indeed waſh their hands in innocency in this Aſſembly; but there is a great deal of work for repentance. Know, that one of theſe two things will certainly be, *Either you muſt plead innocency at the day of Judgement, or plead repentance, otherwiſe you are utterly and everlaſtingly undone*: Conſcience will never abſolve, unleſs there be an *absolute innocency*

As Paul
2 Cor. 1. 12.

gency, or a sincere repentance and faith in Christ, whereby you have made his righteousness yours: How the case stands between God and you, *Let God and Conscience be Judge.* I propose but these things briefly to you, that I may a little awaken you to consider your selves: You expect I should come to the next Proposition.

You have heard, that the heart of mans conscience hath a self-condemning, and a self-absolving power: The second Observation follows;

That even the great God knows all things; take the words (if you please) plainly as they lie: The great God hath an all-seeing, and all-searching eye, *He knows all things, even more then our hearts and consciences do know by our selves.* *Observ.*

If God hath given conscience such a self-condemning power. *2 Use,*
Then *Caution.*

Beware of *Baffling your consciences, and of arming them against themselves.* Remember, O remember often with fear and trembling, the sad condition of Judas, as set forth by *Mar. 27. 3,*
Matthew: His conscience was awakened when it was too late, *4. 5.*
then out of horror ran and confessed his sin, to them who had employed and involved him; *Verse 3.*
He brought the thirty pieces to *Verse 4.*
the chief priests and elders, crying, I have sinned in betraying innocent blood, and they said, What is that to us, see thou to that; did they pity him, and endeavor to relieve him? no such matter. *Note.*
(Who would joy with the Devils servants, who will leave us in the lurch, when they have engaged and entangled us! How much better to close with the servants of the most High, who will be found a present help in time of need, Psal. 46. 1.) They rather
help to plunge him into deep despair (which with his own terrified conscience, coming in as a swift witness and impartial Judge against him) he hangs himself in a sullen discontent, and with the swing fell asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out, *Acts 1. 18.* (which the learned conceive the best Exposition yet not saving repentance.
the manner of Judas his death (and so he went to his own place, *Gualther*
verse 25.) *Harmon, on*

Let me close this Use with a pertinent story out of *Damas. Acts 1. 18.*
Scene, of a man who had three Friends, one he courted much, Damas. cap. 13.
and

and sufficiently gratified the other, but the third he much neglected; and being afterward Arrested, he sent to his two friends, whom he had entertained with so much kindness, to rescue him; they both refused: and then he was constrained to fly unto the third, his poor neglected despised friend, or else he must to Prison, and there rot in misery. Thou hast humored Appetite, and pleased Strife (two very deceitful friends) and abused poor Conscience wretchedly; and yet when God sends any Judge to seize on thee (unless that be thy friend to God, and speak a good word by way of testimony for thee) thou wilt eternally rot in Hellish torments. O be sure to deal tenderly and kindly with thy Conscience.

This place will clear it, as to the heart, and the most secret turnings of it, Heb. 12. 13. *The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts, and the intents of the heart:* Heb. 4. 12, 13. *Neither is there any thing that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do, to give an account.*

There are many people wonder when they come to hear a Sermon, how the Minister comes to know their secrets; and sometimes you shall have a hearer, as he goes out of the Assembly, say, This man, though a stranger to me, hath read over the story of my life, and as if he had been acquainted with my basest secrets all my time, I had them discovered to me in this Sermon; how comes this to pass? it may be you will think some one hath been conversing with the Minister, and he hath consulted with some of my friends; and this is the Calumny that is often raised: It cannot be so; for sometimes a Minister comes to disclose the thoughts thou hadst in thy Counting-house, on thy horse-back when alone, it may be thou shalt have those thoughts laid open in a Sermon; how is this? because the Minister brings the word that is quick and piercing, as the all-seeing God himself, that pierces between the hanes and the marrow, which you know are as close together as you can imagine; yea and a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart: Where you see God does not onely know what we do,

but

τελεω-
νομια.

Note.

but he *knows what we would do*, he knows our very *thoughts and intents*. It is not an ordinary service that you are now upon this day, an extraordinary Fasting-day, and Praying-day, and upon an extraordinary occasion for Union: I do not remember that ever you had such a one for the *whole City* before; indeed, one Copy you had from the *Honorable Houses of Parliament*: what intents you have in it, whence the motion came, what grounds, what desires, what you aim at in it, God knows; although your Ministers that come to Preach, and all you hearers that are present, know not one anothers intentions, yet God knows; and whether *only Conscience*, and *Love to God*, and to his *Cause*, and to *Religion*; and whether it be not a *complemental imitation*, or what ever it be, God knows; and the more *sincerely* there is in it, the more *comfort* you have in it, for God knows whatsoever is in the bottom of your Spirits, when you go to Prayer, and frequent so many services (*as there is much pompous Religion in London*) as to many Lectures in a week, and so many Fasting-days; God knows a great deal of *Hypocrisie in the bottom*, but you cannot *halt before the Sun of Righteousness*; the Lord knows not only what we do, but why we do it, and for what we do it; what ingredients there are in all our actions, which we cannot always discover, *the heart being deceitful in all things, who can know it?*

Ier. 17. 9, 10.

2. God knows more by us in our actions, then all the men in the world can know: For there are many closet-actions, many secret actions in our retirements; and therefore well might the Apostle say here, *God knows all things*, more then all men and Angels: The Devil watches you, and he knows a great deal; and Angels may be *Witnesses* of many of your actions; and you may have *Friends* that may watch over you, and know much by you; but God knows more then all the men of the world, set them all together: and that will appear, it may be, when you come to dye, then you read over a Story of your own life and conversation, which you had forgotten, and your Minister or others could not put you in minde of, *only God stirs up Conscience*, he that knows the heart, all the issues of it, and the Conscience; knows more by you at that time enlightened

by God, then all men do : And therefore you finde that some *Murthers* have been discovered (I had almost said) in a *miraculous way*, when they have been *concealed* a great while, the Lord in a most *wonderful way* hath brought them to light : whence is this ? God knows all things, all our actions ; as, *I know thy Works*, seven times repeated in the Prefaces to the seven Epistles to the seven Churches, *Revel.* the 2. and 3. *Chapter.*

Mat. 25:34,
35,41,42,
&c.

3. Yea, that God knows more good and evil by us, then we know by our selves, will appear at the day of Judgement : You shall finde this most clear in *Matthew*, there at the last Judgement, what says Christ, *You fed me when I was hungry, and you clothed me when I was naked ; Come ye blessed of my Father :* And he says to the other, *Depart ye cursed ; for I was in prison, and ye did not visit me, &c.* God knows more good by his servants, then they know by themselves ; and God knows more wickedness by wicked men, then they know themselves. I am perswaded there are thousands of *Prayers* some of you have put up, and you have forgotten them, *God knows them every one*, and hath them all in a *Book of Remembrance* ; and there is many a *Sin* many of us hath committed, that we are so far from *Repenting of them*, that we have *forgotten them* ; but God remembers all those sins, unless we remember them so in the general, so as to lay hold upon him by a lively *Faith* to *repent* of them, or they will come to be remembered. Many a tear hast thou dropped in thy Prayer, and, it may be, let fall many a *six pence* to poor people, and spoken many *good words* in good *Meetings*, and a little spark fired the whole company, and one little grain of *seed*, came up to many a hundred ; thou hast forgotten this, I, but God remembers it, *He sees all things.* I must hasten.

Mal. 3:16.

Deut. 32:32,
33:34.

Iob 14:17.

Applic.

Use 1.

And here, if you will give me leave to approve my self to God, and to your *Consciences*, and to deal most nakedly and plainly with you ; and in the Application of this, to put you upon considering your own ways, and laboring clearly, and distinctly, and impartially now to know your selves. God knows all things, and therefore I heartily desire, that as ever you would finde favor in the eyes of God, that you may know your
own

own selves so clearly, what is amiss by you, that you may be brought to *humble your selves, and to make your peace with God*; God knows how it is. The counsel the Prophet *Haggai* gives in *Hag. 1.6, 7*. Now says the Lord of Hosts, consider your ways, set your hearts upon your ways: It is part of our business to preach to you this day upon a day of Humiliation, to put you upon this, that you call back your hearts, and set them upon your ways. And I should think it a great mercy of God, if he would please so far to accept poor endeavors, as to whisper it into your ears, even the *greatest person in the Congregation*, if God would but suggest somewhat to thy soul, to bring back thy heart to thy ways, that thou mightest fix upon the story of thy life, from thy minority, thy yonger days, to thy gray hairs, *opus dici*, this is this days work, God knows all. I confess, when I was first invited to this Employment, I thought it had been only a private day, that the *Representative City* had been only here present; and possibly I should then have spoke of some things, that according to the rules of Prudence will not be so fit now to lay open, here being a mixt Auditory, and, it may be, some that will make advantage of the discovery of your miscarriages. But you will give me leave to say what is seasonable to lead you to know your selves.

And I will first begin with you in your own *personal condition*, and beseech you to lay this thought by you, That God knows every man in the Assembly, *Lord Major, Aldermen, Deus est intimior nobis in-*
Common-Council-men (for to you I address my self) God knows *timio nostro.*
you in your greatest intimacy.

In all your *personal ways as you are men, as you are Christians*; He knows you in all your *Family-relations*, what sincerity there is in the bottom of the heart therein: The Lord knows that it may be some of thy Neighbors may censure thee for an *Hypocrite*, and think all thy Religion is but *Ostentation*, thou makest a great shew: If thy heart be sound in Gods Statutes, *Psal. 119. 80.*
be not discouraged, go on in thy way, God knows it, and thou *needest not be ashamed.* And on the other side, if thou beest a *glossing, complementing Hypocrite*, and if thou dost but *act a part in Religion*, and hast got thy tongue tipt with some Gospel language, by hearing and out-living so many Ministers, and if thou

As 1 Sam.

thou beest stil a rotten hearted professor, God knows this, & will discover thee in due time. And in all your relations God knows what you are, possibly some may be *churlish Nabals* to their Neighbors; God knows it if it be so: Possibly some may be *hard-hearted Pharaohs* to their servants; God knows it if it be so: Possibly some may be *cruel Tyrants* to their wives; God knows that likewise: And possibly some may be *fond El's* to their Children, indulgent to them in wicked and ungodly courses, and when they should correct them, and whip them, onely ask them, *Why didst thou so, my childe?* O look upon your selves in all your relations, the Lord who with a candle could search *Jerusalem*, can search every corner of your souls, and know how it is with you.

Ministers
may be plain
with hearers,
especially
upon days of
Humiliation
Act. 2.46.4.
They did eat
their meat
with gladnes
and singlenes
of heart,
praising God
Tertul.

God knows how it is with you in your shops too, whether you have any false weights and measures, or any dark deluding windows, or any adulterate wares; and though you will not swear (perhaps) God knows whether you will not equivocate a lye in your Trading. You will hear with it this day, we come to speak out, and to discover you to your selves and that as God knows all, you may know all, and fall down before God when any thing shall be amiss. O where is that Table-edifying discourse (the best sawce to your meat) The Primitive Saints had three dishes which made them grow fat. O where is the sanctifying of the Lords day, that hath been in fashion amongst the Saints, yea, in reputation amongst Christians in all ages. Go then from your houses, from your shops; Come along to the Exchange; God knows what exchanges you have there, what passions, what lyes, what frothy discourses, what corrupt communication there is, God knows all this; and how much precious time is mis-spent there, sometimes upon the Lords day; God knows all this: And what Malignant Principles are sometimes propagated there, and how men may leaven one another, even in their conversing there together, they go and pretend to make bargains, and trade together: I know not how to speak in a City-language, but others think many times they much putrifie one another, and drive the devils trade there; if there be any such Design on foot, God knows it, and God grant you may know it.

And

*And when you come to your Offices, it may be some are *Constables*, or *Sequestrators*, or of the *Excise-Office*, &c. I cannot fall upon all, what trafficking there, whether you trade more for the *State*, or for *your selves*, or when you are in *public office*, God knows it; Oh! and many a poor *subject in England* knows it; how many estates have been undone, and in pretence (indeed) we come to sequester for the *Publique*, but God knows how little of this the *Publique* hath had; it may be here is a fine *Cabinet*, then such a wife must have it; and here is a fine *Looking-glass*, my wife shall have this at such a price; and here is a goodly *bed*, my Love shall have that; God and Conscience knows these things: And let every one knock at their own doors. God knows, I speak in his sight, without reference to any one, onely there are such discourses as these, wherever it falls.

Furthermore, when you have a great trust committed to you; it may be a *Publique Officer* in a *Congregation* will gather a great deal of *Moneys*, God knows whether there hath not been sometimes *corrupt dealing*; it may be we will go and feast, and be thus jolly, and the poor *Parish* shall pay for all; and then we will have the *Poors Collections*; that must make it up; God knows whether there be not too much over-lashing many times in things of this nature: But they that are in Office can bear it out, and know too often how to spare themselves, and lay the greatest load upon the weakest horse. These things are all naked before the All-seeing God.

And then when you come to make *Levies*, and gather *Taxes*, as you have been much put to it, since these sad Troubles began, whether my *Brother*, *Cousin*, *Friend* must not be spared, and many times a *Parliament friend* pinched more than a *Malignant*; God knows all these things, and I wish you may enquire into your selves, and take notice of it.

When you come (then) to your *Churches*, God knows what carriage there is sometimes in the *Vestry*, when you come to choose a *Lecturer*; I must have such a one, Oh, he is a friend of my friends; and one man will have him upon another pretence, it may be because he thinks he will smooth him, and flatter him, and keep him in generals onely; and another man

There are many *Adams* still drawn away by their wives to eat forbidden fruit.
Lasimer.

draws

draws off, and will not have such a man, because he thinks he will come too close; whether your hearts be faithful and upright in your choyses of such natures: still I must tell you this, *God knows*, and therefore do you look to it.

Rev. 2. 14,
15, 20.

Ier. 5. 29, 30,
31.

And then when you come to the *Administration of the Worship and Service of God in your Congregations*, God knows how patient divers of you have been at many pollutions a great while, that hath cost *England* very dear; now God knows how ready you were when the *Prelates* were in their *ruff*, to comply with them in their *Altar-Prayers*, and *Trinckets*, and the like; that *The Prophets* prophesie falsely, and the *Priests* bear rule by their means, and the *People* love to have it so: All these things are naked before God.

And God knows what a secret *antipathy* of heart there rises in many of you, against the work of *Reformation*, and that there should be now strict proceedings, and your *Congregations* purged of all *Scandalous and Ignorant persons*, kept from polluting the *holy things of God*: Oh! how many invectives are there made; sometimes men inveigh against *Presbytery*, and sometimes against *Independency*, and the plain English of both is, because they cannot indure the strictness of either, because they shall not have so much elbow room for their lusts, nor be so impune wicked as formerly; but the *Eldership and Minister* will now make a more exact *Scrutiny* then heretofore, and this makes them angry: And because they have taken the *Covenant*, they will not appear against *Reformation*, yet they like not this Way, and that Way; because this lies at the bottom, they will not have a strict *Reformation*: God knows all this.

Come to the *Representative City* it self, to the *Court of Aldermen*, and *Common-Council*, God knows how things are carried there, what *unsuitableness* there is many times betwixt your *Spirits*, and your *Places*; He sees there is never a one of you but hath a *Publique Place*, and thereby advanced to some degree of honor; and yet I doubt God may behold in divers of you a change, in a *Publique Place* a *Private Spirit*: Oh! it were a most rare thing, *London* would be *Jerusalem* indeed, and *Jerusalem* in its lustre, if once it were come to this,

this, That all the *Common-Council-men*, and all the *Aldermen*, when they meet together in one place, in one *Court*, if they could come there with *one heart*, and with *one Spirit*, and all having no other design but this in common, To advance the *glory of God*, and the best good of the *City*: This were the way indeed to make you a *City of Righteousness*. But the Lord knows, it may be many that before they were chosen *Common-Council-men*, sober, grave, active Christians for the Publike good, great blessings in the *Wards*, in the *Parishes* where they did live; and then being advanced, grow *Pragmatical*, or it may be grow into something like *Factions*: Some probably on the other hand, more heavily, and *politiquely*, and carnally complying out of *self-ends*: It may be some that have been exceeding active, when they moved in an inferior *Sphere*, when they come up to a *higher Orb*, are so worldly wise, it blunts their Zeal. There was wont to be great complaints, he was a good *Minister*, but an ill *Bishop*; he was an excellent *Councilor*, but a bad *Judge*, advancement spoiled him: God knows whether any thing like this lies at any of your doors; never so good as when *Common-Council-man*, to say no more.

Now therefore, wisely and seriously consider, what Spirit acts you in your *City-meetings*, what is the greatest *Engineer* that drives you on, whether it be the *Publike good*, the Lord knows it: And for the very *Government of the City*, whether sometimes you be not more zealous in your own things, and more remiss in the things of *God*; the Lord knows this: Whether sometimes you be not more indulgent to the rich, and pinch the poor most; how much care you may spend and exercise to maintain your own *Priviledges*, and keep up the *Honor*, and the reputation of the *City*, and it may be too exceeding faint, and flat, and dull, when it comes to the *Sanctification of the Lords day*, and purity of the *Ordinances*, and magnifying of *Christ*, there you moved (may be) as if your Chariot wheels were knockt off: If it be so, *God knows it, and will reckon for it*.

(*Right Honorable, Right Worshipful, and Welbeloved*) I beseech you now lay your hands upon your own hearts, and seriously observe your selves, as in your more private *Sphere*,

and in your several relations, so especially now, as you are *Citizens* indeed, as you are part of the *Representative City*; what *Oathes* you took then, I know not, or whether any or no; but I am sure of this, the very thing it self carries with it an *Obligation*, if the *City* shall advance you to that *Trust*, you are bound to be *faithful* to it, and then to act and move so, as in all things you may discharge your trust. Now God forbid that ever People should say thus upon any good grounds, *Ship-money* was *abroad* *burthen*, but now indeed it is *onely exchanged*; there may be as much oppression in some Officers in raising the Taxes, as ever there was in the Officers in the gathering of *Ship-money*: God forbid this should concern any of you, look to it. Others may say, we were wont to be called before the *Council Table*, and there we must wait and attend, &c. and spend much money; and what if some should complain now, it may be, some *Committees in the City*, where things are not rightly charged, pinch as much as ever other places did: How justly, I know not, but I am sure there are such discourses abroad. Oh! do you seriously and wisely consider, if there be any such distempers; God knows all these things: You have a Conscience that is a *Witness against you*, that will be a *Judge*; and as you would meet the great God with comfort at the great *Assize*, keep a *privy Sessions* often in your own *bosoms*, and set all right and straight there. Oh! let there be a *Conscience-Committee*, let there be a *Bosom-Committee*, let there be a *daily*, not *Quarterly Session* kept there. Great complaints there were heretofore, Such a one he hath a *Monopoly of Sops*, or *Tobacco*, *Lace*, and many things: And many complain now as fast; Such a one hath got a *Monopoly of Offices and Places*, and *Ingrösses all*, & they will thus and thus interest themselves in every thing, and when they have done all, it may be *enrich themselves*, and *impoverish the Publike*. How far these things are to be charged upon any one, I know not: But I so far love the *City*, and would have you prize the comforts of your own *Consciences*, as to take the advantage of this day, and reflect upon yourselves, and sweep every man before his own door. People that are abroad in the *Country* have heard so much of the *fame of London*, since these things began, that they come here with great

great expectation, hearing of the *fidelity and courage of London*, and what you have done with your *Purses*; and how many have *ventured their lives*, they have *great thoughts of London*; but when they shall come up hither, and in some of your shops, and finde as bad dealing here, as in the *Country*; and it may be deal with some of their Officers, and finde as *partial dealing* here as in the *Country*; You know not what sad reports are cast upon the City by this means: and if you would have a lovely picture drawn of *London*, both at home and abroad, I beseech you, Let it not be in vain that the Lord hath put it into your hearts to meet solemnly this day, but let there be some good fruit of it: And I hope every man will take some pains this Evening (or soon after) that he may take some time to view all the *Pages* of his whole course, and when he findes any *Errata*, or any thing amiss, as *Lord Major*, as *Alderman*, as *Common-Council-man*, or *Officer*, that in the consideration of this, That God knows all things, you will fall down before him, and cry every one *Peccavi*, and say, Lord, I know such a thing hath been amiss, and I desire all may be reformed.

And so I have done now with the second ground observable in the words. I hope I shall not oppress you.

You have heard that our hearts have a power of self-condemning, and self-absolving; You have heard likewise, That God knows, the great God hath an All-seeing, an All-searching eye, knows all things, sees how it fares with us: But then,

The self-condemning of our hearts, is a certain pledge of greater condemnation from God. 3. *Observ.*

And why so? Because *Conscience is but Gods Agent*, it is his *Viceregent in our breasts*. That God might carry all things righteously at the Solemn and great day of *Judgement*, he imployes this *subordinate Officer* here to *Record all things*; so then two Books will be open, the Book of *Gods Judgement*, and the Book of *our Conscience*; and they will agree like a pair of *Tallies*, there will be a *concurrence* betwixt them in all particulars: God, he does imploy *Conscience*, if that condemn thee, and if that be not satisfied, but still accuses thee, thou mayest tremble at the thought of it; God himself will

Note.
There must
be purity in
thy consci-
ence to
please God,
else consci-
will never
be satisfied
from God
by peace.

condemn thee at last. For this is certain, *Conscience can never be satisfied, till God be satisfied in and through Christ; and when God is first satisfied in and through Christ, then God will satisfy Conscience.* I confess, that many a mans conscience holds his peace; that is in a very ill condition; but conscience never speaks peace, but when thou art in a good estate before God through Christ. I doubt there may be many ignorant men here, that may be bold, Why, *Conscience troubles me not, and accuses me not*; possibly it may be so: but thy Conscience may be stupified, and tongue-tied, and thou all this while in a most dangerous condition; thou art asleep in the Devils Cradle all this time: but when once Conscience comes, not onely to hold his peace, but to speak peace, that is a great advantage to thee: (that thou shalt hear of by and by) But if nothing can satisfy thy Conscience; thou wouldst appease thy Conscience; and quiet it, and goest to Prayer, and it may be comest to Sermons, and yet Conscience nips thee, follows and dogs thee from place to place, and thou canst not rest: Certainly, if thou have such a mis-giving, self-condemning heart, it is a clear sign that yet God himself is not at peace with thee. Sometimes (indeed) a very honest heart may be troubled, and much perplexed (I would not have any abuse this, for there is a troubled Conscience, that is yet a good Conscience, because then troubled more for sinning against God, then for any thing else) But if thy heart do condemn thee for a wilful living in such a sin, as being obstinately defective (for here the Apostle speaks principally in this, in wanting love to the Brethren) if your hearts condemn you in this, that you do not love truly one another, you can have no solid peace: For I dare boldly say, That there is never a man or woman in the world that hath a good Conscience (though a troubled Conscience, which may be good, when not comfortable) but they do love the Brethren, and love the Saints, and they do not live in any gross sin, and they do not show themselves in any little sin. But now, if thy heart indeed do condemn thee, as not having that which is an undoubted evidence of grace, not the lowest degree of grace, as, thy not wallowing in any sin, not allowing thy self in any the least wicked way, which is inconsistent with the truth of grace thus explain'd, it is a cer-

tain

Character
of a good
conscience.

tain sign, that thou canst as yet expect nothing but condemnation from God.

And therefore (by way of use) *Beware, O beware of defiling, of polluting your own Consciences*; know this, Conscience is Gods servant, and therefore cannot be bribed, will not be corrupted, when once it hath received its Commission from him, is awakened by him: This is the very nature of Conscience (observe it) when other things wisher and dye, then (it may be) *Conscience lives*: when a mans teeth falls out, his hair falls off, and his hearing is gone, and his eye-sight lost, that he cannot see without Spectacles, &c. according to that elegant description of old age by Solomon; then his Conscience begins to live more vigorously, when he comes to dye. It may be thou that hast been an Atheist and dull hearer twenty or thirty years together, and very little more edified by all the Sermons thou hast heard, then the seat upon which thou satest; for this, when thou comest to dye, thy Conscience will torment thee: Oh! it is a dangerous thing to out-live your Consciences; you may out-live your Trading, and Honor, and yet overcome that (at least have comfort under it) but to lose your Conscience; to be Plundered of a good Conscience, it is the worst of all Plundrings: A man had better lose all the world ten thousand times over, then to lose God, and Conscience; no enemy like to Conscience (besides God himself, who does imploy and act it) a million of enemies are not so much as a terrifying Conscience. Divines have a great dispute (many of them) where Hell should be; truly, you need never make an enquiry, God can make a Hell in any one of your Consciences: and if God should open any of your eyes at this time, that have lived in wickedness all your days, and set Conscience on work to torment thee, thou wouldst soon know where Hell is: If God should but let one drop of his wrath fall upon thy Conscience at this time, and discover what a secret wanton such a one hath been, and what a private Drunkard such a one hath been; if he should in his holy Justice set this upon thy Conscience, thou wouldst have a very Hell in thy bosom: Before God advances the souls of the Saints to heaven, he can bring down heaven to their souls; even so he often makes a hell in wicked mens Consciences, before he condemns them into hell.

Applic.

Caution.

Note.

Eccl. 12.

Hell in a wicked mans conscience.

Note.

And

And therefore I beseech you, because that a bad Conscience is a pledge, an evidence of greater condemnation; Take heed how you baffle, abuse, break with your Consciences. Give me leave to propose this short *Dilemma* to you here; Instance in any sin, either you know it to be a sin, or not know it: Suppose Drunkenness, or in Swearing, or in Lying, or in Unclean-ness, or in Sabbath-breaking, or in *want of love*, whoever you are, you know it either to be a sin, or you do not know it; if thou dost know it to be a sin, what a blinde *Atheistical Conscience* hast thou? if thou dost know it, and wilt still live in it, then what a *festred Conscience* hast thou? This is *plain language*, but it is *very wholesom*; no danger to hear of it now, but if it be your doom to *feel it at that left hand* when you come to Judgement, there it will be too late, then you can never make your peace with Conscience, but art eternally undone. Too many men do deal with Conscience (very unwisely) as men do with Bayliffs: Suppose an Officer should have order to Arrest such a man, it may be he will give the Officer, Bayliff or Sergeant, or what you call him, five shillings, or ten shillings, and he spares him; but alas, poor man, *the debt runs on, and the Creditor will be at the charge of a new Writ*: So, you come to a *Sermon*, and it may be a spark of *Truth* falls upon your mindes, and you go home a little convinced; and what will you do? you will go to some company to rub it out, this *Sermon* came close to me: but you have a *jolly way in London*, it may be get to a Tavern, and drink away with a pinte of Sack Twenty Sermons, and with a pipe of Tobacco blow them away, so you can wear out those strokes that the Word of God hath had upon you: Oh! what call you this? there is a simple bribing of the *Sergeant*, but *the grand debt runs on still*: And then it may be God will break thy Estate, and take away thy wife or children, or thou hast lost so much at sea, but thou dost comfort thy self, I have so much left yet, and though you be sad for the present, yet you may get up again; but then it may be a greater cross comes after this; and if all this *break not thy Conscience, it will break thy neck in the conclusion, and send thee packing to Hell, out of whence there will be no Redemption*: Therefore, I beseech you consider it, if you have a self-condemning

Never expect to compound with conscience, unless you first agree with God himself

Divers in London have a jolly profession, and too great a latitude therein.

condemning Conscience, it argues there is a greater condemnation to be expected : Conscience will joyn with God as a Witness and Judge against thee.

Let me add this in the next place, and endeavor to set it a little more on : Conscience, as it will never be bribed, so it is (indeed) such a worm as never dyes : In *Mark 9. 44.* you hear there of a worm that dyeth not, and a fire that never will be extinguished. I believe some of you know what the head-ake, or the Tooth-ake, or the Gout, or a fit of the stone means ; suppose *Eternity* should be added to one of these, if you should have an eternal Tooth-ake, or an everlasting fit of the Stone, would not this be a sad thing ? *Add eternity to an evil, and it makes it infinitely evil :* What will it be to have an everlasting stinging Conscience ? a fire flaming in you that never will be extinguished ? Oh ! this will be the woful fruit of such a bad Conscience ; and therefore take heed of such a self-condemning heart.

If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. Verse 20.

To have a self-approving, a self-absolving heart before God, is a pledge of our acceptation from God.

When thou shalt come to read over the story of thy life, and finde that God hath wrought this grace in thee, and that God hath likewise taught thee to walk conscionably before him, and to love the Brethren, and to love them in deed and in truth : Oh ! here is a pledge of Gods acceptation of thee ; for that argues indeed, *That God is thy God*, if he have given thee a self-approving heart, a self-absolving heart ; He hath made some impresson upon thy heart, something of himself there, given something that is an evidence of thy sincerity, and of his accepting of thee in Christ, and that he owns thee in him, who by his blood hath satisfied Divine Justice for thy sin, and then hast thou grounded confidence towards him : Why confidence towards him ? He is thy God : For doubtless (as I intimated before) if God hath given thee a self-absolving, a self-approving heart, a heart approving thy self to him, according to the rule of the Word, God is thy God ; and God being thy God, thou hast confidence in him, and mayest go and pray

Note.

pray to him, as to the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in him thy Father, and doubt not but God will hear thy Prayers.

Applic. I must forbear the further Confirmation and Explication of this, this being the third Exercise, and the season hot, and divers ancient Citizens present, whose chearful patience should not be discouraged.

And the first Use that I will make of it, is this :

Use 1. You may please to look back to the former Observation, because we shall have occasion (they having so great affinity) to link them both together a little in the Application: *A self-condemning heart, that argues undoubted condemnation from God; A self-absolving heart does intitle us to acceptance with God.*

1. Take heed then (in the first place) that you do not rest in such a condition, wherein you have not your own hearts to approve you, and to absolve you. And not to instance in any other particular, or to return to those generals we mentioned before, I will keep to that that seems to be the *Apostles intention here principally*, speaking of their heart condemning of them for Want of love to the Brethren.

As you profess your selves Christians, take heed that you be not found such, that your heart does not condemn you, as indeed *not loving one another in truth, not loving one another in reality*. This day, it is an *Uniting day*, as well as a *Praying day* (so far as I understood the intent of it) it was in part as to seek God, so to prevent and remove all *jealousies*, and all *Obstructions*, or whatever might hinder a happy Union betwixt the *Court of Aldermen, and Common-Council*, that you might preserve Love and Peace in the City. Oh! therefore, I beseech you, Take heed of any thing that may give occasion to your own hearts to condemn you.

I have some Arguments to prove (I should be glad if you will be well able to answer them) that some are in a guilty condition; and that however you may complement and bear it out, that your hearts are full of self-condemning, even in this particular, that there is no more true love among you. My two Reverend Brethren and Fellow-Laborers have commended

Sedfastness,

Stedfastness, Activity and Unity; Give me leave now to add a plain *Emphasis* to all that, to endeavor, as God shall enable me, to drive this *Nail to the head*, that it may be fastened in every one of your hearts, and to put you upon a self-examining, and self-considering, whether you are able now to approve your selves thus to God, That you have *Spirits settled and composed, and effectually combined in this happy Unity*; that this might be the glory of *London*, to be a *City compact within it self, which was the beauty of Jerusalem*.

Mr. Calamy
on 1 Cor.
15. 58.
Mr. Anthony
Burget on
Psal. 122. 3.
4. 5.
Psal. 122. 3.

You have had Zeal for the *Publique*, and have let go your *Money* (blessed be God that hath put it into your hearts to be so zealous) yea, have lost much *Money*, and many of your *Friends*, and God forbid now you should *lose your selves* for want of love.

A great Politician saith, That *England is a huge mighty Animal*; (he tells you also what he thinks of *France* and *Spain*) but he gives this Character of *England*, That *England is such an Animal, that will never dye, unless it kill it self*: Truly, I hope the same of *London*, that it will *never dye* (to speak as men) *unless it kill it self*; And I know no more compendious method to stifle and undo your selves, then for want of love: Oh! what a victory would this be to the *Blood-thirsty Adversaries*? when all their plots could not break you, you should break one another through your *Divisions*: What a triumph would there be at *Oxford*? how would they insult? if that when they could not reach you, you should bite and tear one another: Blessed be the Lord, that hath put it into your hearts to extinguish what sparks there are, before they come to flame.

Gal. 5. 15.

Too many *Citizens* (I doubt) herein do over much resemble their *Gardens*, which are full of *goodly Tulyps*, beautiful to the eye, but neither good for *pot* or *smell*; so they have a *pompous love, a specious kindeness*, in exchanging some *Visits* and *Invitations*, but little or no conference to the good of one anothers *souls*, little or no *usefulness* to one another in reference to the *Publike*. This appears,

1. Because there is so much *Envy* in the *City*: Now certainly *Envy* proceeds from want of love; for if you did love one another

Some Arguments, that there is much want of this sweet flower of brotherly love in the Garden of *London*.

Discovering Arguments of want of love.

1. Envy argues want of love.

another indeed, you would *heartily* rejoice in one anothers good. But, *alas*, that such a one should have a *Place* rather than I, and such a one should have more *Power*, and more *Influence* then I have, Oh ! many men cannot bear it: What call you that, truly it is want of love ; such a man wants love to his *Neighbor* that he envies ; and he wants also love to the *Publique*, if he envies another man that is *abler to do the Service of the Publique* then he is : were there love to the *Publique*, if there were any man in the *City* more *active*, and *fitter* for the work of the *Publique* then *he* is, he would rejoice that such a one is called to it ; this would argue love indeed.

2. Censuring one another argues want of love.

And then, that there is such a deal of *censuring* : Oh ! that argues defect in love too. How do Brethren *censure* and *tear* one another : The Lord knows it is too much amongst *Ministers* ; I wish *All* whom it concerns may be humbled for it : And people *censure* their Minister, and one another, because they do not all concur and comply ; some are of different *Judgements*, some are of one *minde*, some of another ; in things of lesser *consequence*, who condemn one another, I'll not say as much as *Papists* and *Protestants*, but truly it is in danger to grow to it : As it is abroad now, *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* both pretend to be for *Religion* and *Reformation*, but it is a cause among them, that *Religion* much suffers, and the progress of the Gospel is very much obstructed by it. Take heed of censuring ; this is want of love.

3. Oppressing others argues want of love to them.

Further, here is another Argument, not onely from Envy, not only from Censuring, but indeed from your *oppressing* others in Taxes and Levies, and such kinde of ways, when things are carried on with *extreme partiality*, and with unjust *indulgence* to some, and *severity* unto others ; what call you this now ? it is want of love : Because, didst thou love thy Neighbor as thy self, thou wouldst do nothing to thy Neighbor, but what thou wouldst have thy Neighbor do to thee, in the same posture, in the same juncture and concurrence of circumstances, which our *Savior* makes the *rule and expression of real love*.

Mat. 7. 12.

And then likewise, when you are so *selfish* in your designs and *undertakings*, and so far prefer your self-ends before the *Publique* ; this is still want of love. The Apostle was a Prophet,

in 2 Tim. 3. beginning, *In the last day shall be perillous times; Why? Men shall be lovers of themselves.* I know not any thing that this day does indanger the *Parliament party* in *England*; the *City party*, those that are hearty for *God and his Cause*, then the *predominancy of self-love*; for men now love themselves better than the *Kingdom*, better than the *Church*, better than the *State*, love their own *Estates*, their own *advantages* more than all; and this exposes them to abundance of *snarcs*, because they love themselves *inordinately*: O therefore, 1 Tim. 6. 9, steer all *Publique Councils* even according to this *very rule*. I beseech you, you that are of the *Court of Aldermen*, and *Common-Council-men*, consider, *That the less self-love you bring with you to your City Transactions, the better you are to manage all your Affairs*: Oh! it were a happy thing, that every time you come to appear in your *Senate-house*, you could leave *self-love* behinde you, and say, I will go now, not as such a man, and such a man, and as I am at home, but I'll go as one of the *City*, and as one of the *Representative Body*; and if Self would *step up*, and put in it self, *Stand by Self*, the *City* must first be concerned, and the *Publique* must first be minded: The Lord put this into the hearts of them in *Government*, thus indeed to prefer the *Publique good* before themselves; we should have more cause to rejoyce in that, then for any *Victory* that ever yet the *Citizens* had: And I am confident in this, if the Lord would help *Parliament*, and *Kingdom*, and *Assembly*, and *Armies* to conquer this *Bosom Enemy*, this that leads the *Faction* here, this *predominant self-love*, it would be a greater cause of triumph, then ever we had yet for any *Victory* (though we have had many glorious ones) as long as ever you are full of *Envy*, or full of *Oppression*, or full of *Censuring*, or full of *Selfishness*, it argues you want love.

Then give me leave in the next place, to bespeak your love; it is the work of the day: and as you would approve your selves indeed to *God*, and as you would have confidence in *God*, and as you would expect acceptance to *God*, and would be welcom to the *Throne of Grace*, when you go to *Prayer*, and finde favor with *God*; Then, labor to take out this *Lesson*, get a self-absolving heart in this particular, that you are sure you have love to the *Brethren*.

Note for
Citizens.

If there were more love amongst all *persons of quality*; if *Common-Council-men*, and those in place of *Power*, did often meet together, not to nourish *prejudices* one against another, nor foment *differences*, these things would be *signs of love*, and *incentives to it*: You have heard sometimes talk of *differences* between the *Houses*, Oh! what a sad thing were this? as that the *House of Commons*, may be, should have some *jealousies* of the *Peers*, and the *Peers* sometimes of the *House of Commons*; if there have been any such *jealousies*, or *misunderstandings*, then you know *Publique things have not gone on so well*: And now truly men begin to speak of the *City*, you had better hear of it in this place, then from other men who love you not: There is difference so between the *Court of Aldermen*, and *Common-Council-men*, and now they begin to dispute about their *Priviledges*, and there grows *Debates and Contentions*: The Lord, if it be his good will, hear our *Prayers* this day; Oh! that there might be a spring opened this day, that might wash away all *prejudices*, and *jealousies*, and *suspitions*, that both *Court and Council* might be made one, in reference to the *Publike*. I know not any thing would joyn you, and soder, and cement you together better then a *Spirit of Love*: If there were but a *Spirit of Love* to act the *Common-Council*, and to act the *Court of Aldermen*, you would sweetly imbrace one another. And I beseech you take a word (though it be out of my *Sphare*) yet from a *Minister of the Gospel* take it, who desires to be faithful to your souls, and to the *City*; *It is plain and wholefom advice*: When there was some small divisions betwixt the *Houses of Parliament*, Oh! says one *Citizen*, would to God they would leave *disputing of their Priviledges*, and joyn against the *Common Enemy*: And when there hath been any clashing in the *Armies*, Oh! would the *Commanders* would let them alone till they come to their *Garrisons in the Winter*, and then let them debate it, onely now let us go on vigorously against our *Enemies*. I beseech you (worthy *Citizens*) do so too: If there be any disputes about your *Court and Council*, let them sleep; God forbid you should betray or prostitute any of them, onely be so wise, as to take the *seasonablest time to dispute them*, if your *disputing of them* in this
nick

nick should set all on fire; when you should joyn *purses* and *hands*, and all against the common Enemy, for you to fall all to pieces amongst your selves, surely you will disparage your selves, and deceive the world, that expects so much wisdom, and zeal, and courage, and faithfulness to the publique Cause from *London*, that if now jealousies and misunderstandings should creep in, and scotch the wheel, how would people be frustrated of their expectations, that have such thoughts of *London*! Be pleased to suffer these things to enter into your most serious thoughts, and make it appear that love does spring, and that you do not over-love your own Priviledges, or any thing that is your own, when it comes in competition with the *Publique*. I love every man should love that that is to be loved, in a due proportion, according to its share, with reference to *Christ and his Cause*: There are now great things on foot, and (blessed be God) we have heard some welcom news this day; *Is not this very comfortable, to hear good news in our Worshipping of God, and seeking for peace, as if God would encourage us to pray, and endeavor more after it?* What news is it? Seven thousand persons in *Taunton* relieved, where were so many precious souls of the countrey got together, and that now when Heaven was besieged with Prayers of the Saints, God himself hath been pleased to be overcome, and to raise the Siege of the Enemy. Here is rich encouragement for the *Psal. 124. 6.* Generation of true *Jacobites*.

You have an *Army on foot*, and a great deal of prudent and speedy care is required, to consider how it should be maintained, and how to manage these publique Affairs most dexterously: when there comes a winter season, when there is no such time, nor need for such vigorous motion in these *Enterprizes*, then dispute your *Priviledges*, and then *Write Books*, and then debate what is between the *Common-Council* and *Court of Aldermen*; and then enter as serious and deliberate consultation as you will, and set the saddle upon the right horse, and let every man have his due; but take heed now you let not in your Enemy, by making a *Breach amongst your selves*, when you keep *Court of Guards* that costs you so many thousands a year, neglect not the *Guard of Peace and mutual Love*.

Psal. 65. 2.

If you give up the City, *this famous flourishing City*, into their hands by your division, how will *Rome*, and *Spain*, and all the *World* (that are Enemies to the Cause of God) *Triumph*, that they have got a Victory over those that they counted their greatest Enemies to their grand Design? Where is your love, worthy Citizens! get this self-absolving heart: The Lord grant this may be such a Uniting day, that this Church may be a grave to bury all the beginnings of Division, and that you may go out of Gods presence *glowed together*. And why should not we expect it, though there be so many defilements that may provoke God to blast all, *he being a God hearing Prayers*? but all our work is not done when our prayers are done; we will observe what good fruit is come of our prayers; you will have it in every Book, The City had such a meeting, and they met together; And for what? some will say, For to humble themselves, and to pray to God that they may be United: Then the next week the question will be, What news of it? how we bless God for it? If now the *Court of Aldermen, and Common-Council* might joyn as one man, then they should conclude, God hath heard their Prayers, and accepted of their endeavors: Certainly, this is a blessed design, and most proper for this days work.

Livy Histor.
Decad. 1.
Book 2.

It will not be unseasonable to acquaint you with the prudent carriage of *Menenius Agrippa*, who by a witty Parable (no wonder our blessed Savior delighted so much in Parables, they being so prevalent to perswade) composed the great Distractions amongst the Romans, The chief Magistrates were agrieved, thinking the inferior Commons had too many advantages: Upon a time (saith he) the other parts of the [natural] body complained, that all their care and industry must be to make provision for the stomach, whilst that sits quiet, enjoying the pleasures we bring in to it: Hereupon the other party combine to tame the stomach by hunger, so that the hand would not reach meat to the mouth; nor the mouth receive it, which suddenly brought the whole body to an extreme Consumption: Hence the necessary use of the stomach did most clearly appear, that as it received strength from their care, so by a reciprocal influx, it helped to convey nourishment to the whole. There needs no Application.

plication. In the *Body Politick*, whether of *City or Kingdom*, *mutual Help* is as necessary, let it be as acceptable, lest by your jarring you breed a *Consumption* in the whole. Note.

Give me leave to subjoyn that which I thought of, that in that holy man *Ezra*, He proclaims a *Fast at the river Abana*, *Ezra 8. 21*, that they might seek of God a right way for themselves and their little ones, and all their substance. And what was his reason? A very pious and worthy one, and I would gladly think so well of this worthy City, that you had as good a reason for this meeting; Because we (says he) had spoken to our King, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him: I was ashamed to require of the King a band of soldiers, and horsemen to help us against the enemy. Here was a good man had spoke great things of his God; and now, if he should have gone and desired the King, that was but a Heathen, Pray Sir, let us have a party to guard us through the Countreys, what would he have thought of them? what, have you said such great things of your God, that he hath sought you out, and what need you my men to guard you? He thought this would blemish them, and therefore he seeks God, that they might finde out a way, and not bring a scandal upon him, nor give advantage to the bloody enemy that stood watching against them. 22, 23.

Note his care not to scandalize an Heathen Prince.

I hope this was the Design of the Right Honorable, the Lord Major, and the Common-Council, and whoever were Agents in this business; you begin to be afraid of some heart-burnings, and jealousies, and you thought if it should break out, how the enemy would triumph, therefore you will seek God by Fasting and Prayer, for a right way to unite you: The Lord be blessed for putting this into your heart; surely the Scripture-way is the best way to conquer all these jealousies that have been among you, namely, Real love one to another: and, I hope you will have a good fruit of this days prayer, in some more sweet harmony of Spirits, in the two grand points of Difference amongst you;

1. In Church matters.

2. In Civil matters.

First, for your love in Church matters; there is a great deal of

Unity in
Church mat-
ters lovely.

of need to preach this Doctrine to *London*, you have had much said to you already concerning *unsettledness in Opinion*: truly, it is a sad condition, yet I would not have people *discouraged* at it, for it was always so in *Reformation-time*, in *Luthers* time and others: As when the Sun arises in its lustre, there are drawn up a great many fogs and vapours; so it is when the Sun of *righteousness* arises, there is a great deal of liberty many take to themselves, and many wanton and wicked Opinions there are abroad; there are in Gods garden many unfavoury weeds (*The Lord who knows it remove them*) What should we do? Oh! let us improve our utmost, how we may bring things to a happy Union. And for the Church, I have but two things to say to compose all the Differences:

1. You have heard already many seasonable hints concerning Unity, and the commendation of it; it is a *work like God himself, to be a Reconciler*: God was in *Christ* reconciling the world to himself. And I desire heartily, that *Ministers*, and *Citizens*, and that all ranks and sorts of people now were Reconcilers: There are too many *Incendiaries*, and I fear, not any one plot of the *Jesuits* against the City more then this (and I am confident, if you have *Jesuits* among you) you have their Plots and Designs, to raise up Divisions about Church-government. A great deal of talk there is about *Differences between those you call Presbyterians, and Independents*, and men use all their wits to heighten the Difference to the utmost; and if there were but half the pains to *lessen*, as there is to *greaten* them, I should hope we might joyn *heads and hearts*, and all without any such *formidable breach*, as some think. What do people think? Surely, one party must be absolutely broken, if God gives us the wisdom and sobriety that is from above, *first pure, and then peaceable*; I hope there may be a Reconciliation of both, without the Destruction of either: Certainly (though there are, I believe, extremities on both sides) yet both too good to be *condemned*. Now I would have this considered, many drive on this *Design*, and God knows there is a great deal of *animosity* in it; some *Presbyterians*, I doubt, would be willing to destroy the *Independents*, though they ruine the *Publique* in it; and I fear, some *Independents* would do so for them: Doubtless

Iam. 1. 27.

There is too much rigor as hath in others of both parties. There is no such difference, for ought I know, between the sober Independent, and moderate Presbyterian; but if things were wisely managed, both might be reconciled; and by the happy union of them both together, the Church of England might be a glorious Church, and that without persecuting, banishing, or any such thing, which some ministers are too full of. I confess, it is most desirable, that Confusion (that many people fear by Independency) might be prevented: And it is likewise desirable, that the Scowry that some others fear, by their rigor of Presbytery, might be hindred; Therefore let us labor for a prudent Love, and study to advance an happy Accommodation. Give me leave to say two or three words to this purpose:

Is it not a sad thing, that when Rancor and godly men (for so you will allow them to be on both sides) I say, First, When they shall agree in the Doctrinal part, in the Confession of Faith; I hope you will hear of little or no difference there.

2. When they shall agree likewise in the Practical part of worship, for that you see by the Directory, all have in a manner agreed there.

3. When they shall agree likewise in the Destructive part; as, for the ruine of Episcopacy, and removing of the Ceremonies, and all that crabs.

Here are Three wonderful steps: and I believe five years ago here is not a man in this Congregation, did expect so much as God hath already granted us: At the beginning of the Parliament our hopes were but low, and modest in regard of what we have; and yet because all things come not upon a sudden, we wrangle, and quarrel with this man, and that man, yet with Divine Providence; but let us look back and see what a Sea we have got over, Your Common Prayer book is gone, and your Ceremonies and Episcopacy hath its deadly blow.

*4. Nay further, Another Rep is taken, and if any thing reconcile differing Brethren, this is a very probable means, and is hath past the Assembly a long time since, and the House of Lords a great while ago, and now hath almost the House of Commons (the Vote of it, as I hear, is past) notwithstanding, *Ordinances, taking care for removing of Offences in**

God hath
done much
for us in
Reformation

Congregations, of ignorant and scandalous persons, who Judas the
Sons of the Serpents, by their Divisions, that do pollute the things
of God; and that there shall be an intrinsic power in every
Congregation to keep away such. What would you have more
if this be granted, let aside the word *Independency* (for who
will own it) it is a word neither fit for *Creatures*; nor for *Chur-
ches*, we must be all dependent, an absolute *Independency* is in
where to be allowed; but call it *Classical* and *Congregational*.
Let us begin in the right method, Every Congregation shall have
its power, there shall be a Pastor, and Elders with him; and
they shall have a power put into their hands, to enquire who are
Scandalous and Ignorant in every Congregation, and they shall
be kept from joining with them at the Lords Table, till they have
expressed Repentance, and got competent knowledge; and given
satisfaction for their scandal. And this is the thing the *Inde-
pendents* contest for, and the *Presbyterians* concur in; and if
this be granted, is not this a good step towards our Agree-
ment? But this is not all.

An happy
Rep.

5. Here is somewhat more to gratify the *Presbyterians*;
When there are six Congregations, more or less, though every
one hath an intrinsic power within themselves, to order
things that are proper and peculiar to them, yet they may at
least advise with a *Presbytery*; and things of difficulty and con-
sequence, and common concernment may be transacted with *Com-
mon Council*: As suppose a Congregation have Excommunicated
a person, it may be he findes himself agrieved, he will com-
plain to the Consociation of those neighbor Churches in that Clas-
sis: Those Ministers will require the Pastor and Elders of that
Congregation, to give them an account why they did Excommu-
nicate such a man? they will hear it; and when they have
heard it, they will finde they did well or ill; and if well, they
will confirm it by an accumulative power, and say, You have
done nothing but what we would have done; and according to
the Word of God, and here this confirmation comes to strengthen
what the Congregation hath done: or if they finde they did
rashly and incogitantly, and out of a spirit of Revenge, they
will say, You are bound to reverse this, and you had no ground
to Excommunicate him; you must recall the Sentence.

This accom-
modation is
much nearer
then when
this Sermon
was preach-

wish we cannot maintain fellowship with you: Will not here be a sweet communion together, and blessed conjunction, and (I hope in time) a mutual satisfaction; and certainly, it were the best complexion, and would draw a great deal of real love. I wish I had such a temper, as not to be so far obliged to an Independent, as to close with him in any thing that is not good; or so far engaged to any Presbyterian, as to close with him in any thing that is evil; that thus we might win upon our several minds, and give comfortable, go with them both so far as is agreeable to the Word of God, and here is a blessed way to a firm and lasting Union. And now, that this is not my own notion and fancy only, for I know nothing I have said, but is past the Assembly long since. For in the Paper, if I very much mistake not, concerning Accommodation, the power of Excommunication is so allowed to the Congregation, and that he may be Excommunicated by the Eldership thereof: What would you have more? Here you do harmoniously link Congregational and Episcopal power both together. (And therefore away with all Jesuitical plots, to disperse those that are in such a probable way of union. And indeed there were two things that made the breach at first: Why did our Brethren go to New-England, or abroad to other places? Either there was a form of Prayer imposed, or Ceremonies they could not submit to (blessed be God that is turned out at the back door, and there is a Dwelling for that) or else mixed Communion. And the Parliament hath given evidence, That they will take order for such a power in every Congregation, that an honest heart may with much comfort there sit down, and so purge and refine his own Congregation, that he may with much honor to Jesus Christ, and satisfaction to his own Spirit, enjoy the Ordinances of God in much purity. Therefore I beseech you, stir up your selves, and one another, that we study how to lessen the differences, and do not give way to passionate dividing invectives. God forbid there should be any such in Pulpit, or in Corner, or at Table. Let us all get reconciling Spirits, and speak uniting language in our Sermons, in our Books, and upon all occasions, that if it were possible, they that are like to dwell in one Heaven hereafter, might now dwell in one England, and might serve God together,

and joyfully advance Jesus Christ together in the power of his Ordinances, and live in sweet peace and harmony together.

2 Cor. 16. 14. Eph. 5. 2. As in Church matters, so I beseech you, show your love likewise in all your Transacting Civil and Gray Affairs, manage all your meetings, your negotiations with love: Let all things be done in love (says the Apostle) walk in love, not onely now and then, and speak in commendation of love, you hear a Sermon of love, with approbation, but do all things in love; give counsel in love, and reprove in love; and *tax* with love; and whatsoever affairst you are to transact, let all still be done in love: when you come abroad in the streets, there you will meet a company of poor people, a proper object for love of pity; it were worthy of this City to consider them: Your love is principally intended, I confess, to the Saints, to wit, a love of complacency; but have all, love your Enemies: Love should be of a *diffusive overflowing disposition*. Love poor fatherless Children, so as to bring them up at School (blessed be God that you have so many Schools here) and I hope the City will both wisely and conſonably still cherish those *Nugseries*, that yong Children may be bred to write and read, and so afterwards bound Apprentices, that they may be set to good Callings, or fitted for the University, those that have parents, and look to your Door. It would be a project worthy the wisdom of this renowned City, that is famous for many things: Many decayed Tradesmen there are, and many that were good housekeepers before, are faine to go a begging, which they do in the night, being ashamed to appear in such an habit in the day: What if you should choole some one relieving Committee, to give money to the poor, you have many ready enough, to take it from them; to consider how you should finde out some way for the poor to get their living, men, women, and yong children, men that live idly; better give six pence to one that is working, then a peny to one that is idle; you nourish them up in a trade of temptation, as long as you *nurish* them up in idleness. For maimed Soldiers, let your love be shewn to them; but for those that are able to work, take care to keep them in employments, but rather relieve them working, then begging. This were like true love indeed, a Fasting, days fast; as you heard

One Committee for relief of the poor, very desirable.

heard a word of it before out of *Iſa* 58. what a Fast would you have? ſuch a Faſt as there the Prophet ſpeaks of.

It was not the Faſt that I have choſen, to looſe the bands of wickedneſſe, to undo the heavy burthens. If the Lord would ſhew that mercy, to crown this Faſt with ſucceſs, that if you have been too rigid in your Taxes, too ſevere and partial in your Impoſitions, and put it into your hearts to looſe burthens, and to let the oppreſſed go free, and caſe every yoke, though you have ſown in tears, you would reap in joy. *Iſa.* 58. 6. *Pſal.* 126. 5.

And is it not likewiſe to deal bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are caſt out, to thy houſe; when thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou covereſt them; and that thou hide not thy ſelf from thine own fleſh: Here is work for a Faſting-day: and ſay not, It is putting up ſo many Prayers and hearing ſo many Sermons: The queſtion is, whether you will *act over* your own Prayers, and the Sermons you have heard this day; will you take out this Leſſon? Oh! how will you rejoyce the heart of your praying ſervants, the hearts of all the City, the weſtlers Wiſh God, if ſuch viſible fruits ſhould ſpring up after this days exerciſe, it would encourage others to creep into corners upon ſuch an occaſion.

Ver. 7.

Here is a ſpecial promiſe, *Then ſhall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health ſpring forth ſpeedily. There is darkneſſe in the City,* in many particulars now, ſad darkneſſe: how know you but light may break forth, the light of comfort every way, if there were ſuch real fruit of your Faſting and Prayer: Then ſhall thy health ſpring forth ſpeedily, God might heal your Diſtempers, and keep you in a heavenly frame. It is an admirable mercy (I am glad God hath brought it to my minde) which the God of Salvation hath ſhewn to you ſince the Parliament began, in preventing the Plague from ſpreading in London, one Troop of deſtroying Angels might have done that, that all the Armies againſt it could not have done: you have had it lingering amongſt you divers Summers but God hath given you the comfort of your Prayers, and health hath ſprung exceedingly in the City; and who knows but God may give an answer to this days poor prayer, and health may yet ſpring more plentifully: And thy righteouſneſſe ſhall go before thee, the glory of the Lord ſhall be thy reward. I know when the City hath been called *Treyars*, and

Verſe 9.

Isa. i. 22, 24.
16

and black aspersions have been cast upon you; The Lord knows how to clear you; and no doubt, stick close to God, and watch with your prayers, and act as well as pray, and trust God with your credits and liberties, doubt not but he will make it good: *Thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.* The Lord may take away your dross, and your tin; whereas it was said of Jerusalem, *Thy silver is become dross, thy wine is mixed with water; therefore I will ease me of mine adversaries,* saith the Lord. There was a sad judgement upon Jerusalem, when they were in a degenerating condition: But I hope God will rather turn your dross into gold, and you will become a City of righteousness, where God might delight to dwell, and to show himself: Let there be but a good fruit of your Fasting and Prayer, and see what you may expect from God.

Ver. 9.

And further, *Then thou shalt call upon me, and the Lord will answer:* Here is the very thing in my Text now, you have this confidence, if you love one another, that whatsoever you ask you shall receive: *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer, then shalt thou cry, and he shall say, Here I am.* Oh, what an obligation is here, that you have Gods ear, and Gods hand thus far engaged to you; that if you do but Fast and Pray as God requires, no sooner shall you go and pray, but God shall say, *Here I am;* What, would you speak with me? Would you knock at Heaven gate, He be found of you: And truly, you Londoners have often had proof of it, most gracious returns of your prayers: what evils others have felt, you have heard of; what miseries poor Bristol and Exeter have undergone, that you heard related, and it hath been coming towards you; when some have come and told you, The Kings Army are coming to London, you have gone to your prayers, and God hath said, *They shall not come hither, but here I am.* And yet this is not all, though I think I have said enough (if God please to concur with weak pains, to leave somewhat upon your hearts) yet here is more behind: *It soon take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity.* Be pleased, worthy Citizens, my Lord Mayor, and Aldermen, and Common-Council, consider, what speaking of vanity there is, what putting forth of the finger, where is any yoke that pinches your men? Let us enquire in all our transactions, where is any Tax pinches

pinches any man? where is any Sequestration Officer that oppresses any man? And what follows?

Ver. 10.

And if thou wilt draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted. Many a hungry soul there is come up to London, and blessed be God that you have the honor to be the *Grainary* now for a great part of *England*; and the Lord hath with advantage paid you, for you have relieved others with your *Temporals*, and they have relieved you with their *Spirituals*: For their lights that did shine forth in the West, and in other parts of *England*, are now translated and set up in *London*. And whereas you have been kinde, and let others your Tables, and afforded them comfort, God will not be behinde hand with you: Go on therefore and shew more love: then shall thy light rise as in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day. What encouragements are here one upon the neck of another? *Thy light shall rise in obscurity*; it lies sometimes under a cloud, and darkned with aspersions, and it is true, a great disparagement lies upon you: Here are (say they) many *Heresies* and *Schisms*, and the like, and I know not what to call them: if you would take one but that lesson I named before, if the Lord would be pleased to unite them they call *Presbyterians* and *Independents*, I doubt not but the rest would in time fall off and wither; *Anabaptism*, and the like, that take shelter under *Independency*, and that *live by other Divisions and Fractions*, they would never stand, if the other were but accommodated, and light of truth would arise in obscurity; and amongst the many *staggerings* that are in the City, a glorious light of comfort would arise, and thy darkness be as the noon day: And what follows? *And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought*: Suppose droughts should come, any hard times, the Lord will satisfy thy soul, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of waters, whose waters fail not. Here is rich comfort indeed. Go into a garden when you have watered it, and if you will tomorrow morning first, it looks more amiably, secondly, smells more sweetly, thirdly, springs more fruitfully. What a blessed thing were it to see *London* in this posture after a day of Praying; that *London* might look more beautiful in unity and purity then before. If a man went to draw the picture of *London* now, to make it look more lovely, I would desire these three colours,

Note.

Ver. 11.
Hebr.

Londons
beautiful
picture.

colour, *Purity in Religion, Equity in the administration of Justice and Unity, A sweet combination of your Spirits in truth*: This would make you look more amiably and smell more sweetly. If a man come into a shop to buy any *Commodity* his bargain as cheap as I can afford it, and a little good counsel to the bargain; no oaths, no lying, or deceiving; this would make the reputation of London very like a precious pot of ointment at home and abroad.

And then (spring more fruitfully, all London all over green; no into the streets, you shall not see a beggar there; go into the Hospitals, in one there are *your fatherless children brought up for the universities or Trade*, and go to another, there are all *maimed Soldiers taken care for*: This were worthy of such a City as you profess your selves to be, and after such an Extraordinary day as this is protested to be: We look not only for a *Christianity*, and the like; but as the day is Extraordinary, so we pray, and hope (surely God expects it) that there should be some extraordinary fruit, some *Monuments* erected after this. When the Court of Aldermen and Common-Council come together, they should say, We were such a day *met together*, and upon a praying day, and when we were praying, we heard news of *Taunton* relieved. Oh! let us do somewhat, and let up some Marble Pillar of Reformation, to record such a mercy, endeavor to bring forth some good lasting fruit.

Ver. 13.

There is one thing more, and that is the end of the Chapter, and so I have done: The Argument is so reasonable, that I hardly know how to break it off; but I must consider my self and you: And they that shall be of thee, shall build the old waste places, and thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called the repairer of breaches, the restorer of paths to dwell in.

I thank my God, I come not here to flatter you, yet I must speak the truth, I know no Society (next the Parliament) I am sure no City in England hath so great a share in the Reformation, as London hath had; and if you will but now ask your Prayers, God will bestow this honor upon you: For here he says, They that be of thee shall build the old waste places, and thou shalt raise up the foundation of many generations. And truly, the Courage of London, and the Purse of London, the Piety of London, the Fidelity of London (blessed be God, whose grace it is) I desire to honor God, and not to flatter you in it: Blessed be God, you have had a very great share in it already, and there is more to come, and thou shalt be called a repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in: What ever others say, London is a rebellious City, a den of thieves, and the like; yet if you put your prayers into action, God will put this honor upon you, you shall be called The repairer of the breaches: Let others have this brand, They would make a breach in the Houses, in the Assembly, in the City, they would break all to pieces, but they themselves shall be broken in the consolation, and God will make them this one faithful to him, Repairer of the breach.

As of Ierusalem, Neh. 4.
13. The rebellious and bad City.

